

2020 Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor North of Falcon Forecast Public Meeting

February 27, 2020

Montesano City Hall, Montesano 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

WDFW Staff: Chad Herring, Barbara McClellan, Mike Scharpf, Kim Figlar-Barnes, Lyle Jennings, James Losee, Jody Pope, Larry Phillips, Jenny Allan, Rob Allan, Ron Warren, Captain Dan Chadwick, Brian Alexander, Kwasi Addae

Public: 60 Individuals

Chad Herring:

- Opening statements and ground rules
- Introductions
- Meeting Purpose – Provide information to the public in order to allow the public to engage in the salmon fisheries planning for 2020
- North of Falcon (NOF) and Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) processes
- NOF Public Meeting Schedule
- Administrative Procedures Act (APA) – Legal process for rules
- Environmental Conditions – poor ocean conditions appear to result in poor survival of salmon
- Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW)
- Constraining stocks for NOF and PFMC process
 - Chinook
 - Lower Columbia River Naturals (LCN or Tules)
 - Total exploitation rate needs to be $\leq 38\%$
 - Mid Hood Canal
 - Stillaguamish
 - Coho – low forecasts statewide
 - LCNs
 - Queets
 - Puget Sound stocks
 - Chum
 - Puget Sound stocks well below recent year averages
- Management Objectives
 - Grays Harbor
 - Spring Chinook – forecast below natural escapement goal. No Chehalis Spring Chinook fishery will likely be scheduled
 - Humptulips Coho – limited to a 5% impact rate cap
 - All other salmon stocks are managed to natural escapement goals
 - Willapa Bay
 - Chinook – limited to a 14% impact rate cap for all fisheries
 - Chum – limited to a 10% impact rate cap for all fisheries
 - Coho – needs to meet natural escapement goal

- Forecasts
 - Grays Harbor
 - Chehalis Chinook natural = 11,144, hatchery = 2,037
 - Chehalis coho natural = 46, 115, hatchery 29,753
 - Humptulips Chinook natural = 3,857, hatchery = 6,307
 - Humptulips coho natural 3,850, hatchery = 12,573
 - Grays Harbor Chum natural = 30,324, hatchery = 2,325
 - Willapa Bay
 - Chinook natural = 2,814, hatchery = 28,271
 - Coho natural 17,850, hatchery 51,785 – natural forecast is very low and will likely limit fisheries
 - Chum natural 39,845, hatchery 959
- Public links for providing comments provided in PowerPoint hard copy

Public Comments:

- For Willapa, for PFMC the objective for coho is naturally spawning fish
- It would be nice to know whether the state is operating the hatcheries properly given the stoplight chart and how those releases by species are impacted.
- Advisors do not vote on anyone's behalf. They provide input.
- Will the agency honor the 14% management objective for Chinook in Willapa?
- Disagree that we don't manage for recovery.
- Coho spawning escapement for 2019 is still preliminary or currently unavailable because we are still doing spawner surveys at this time.
- Utilize the advisors.
- Advisors do not have a responsibility to the public
- GH salmon policy has sharing principles between non-treaty marine and freshwater recreational fisheries
- Grays Harbor coho forecasts are technically agreed to with Quinault Indian Nation
- The public can request any data from the Dept. The agency has been willing to provide what they have.
- Does the Dept recognize that the forecasts are flawed and what is the Dept doing to correct those issues?
- How does the state explain how the state is representing the constituents during tribal negotiations? How is the agency going to explain the transparency issues with the public?
- The harvest rates for GH and Willapa are caps. Why do neither of these include a buffer (i.e. 30%) when planning fisheries relative to this cap preseason?
- Don't feel that there is an adequate representation of the data. The data is flawed, and it would be good to see how it's captured. What about the data quality from the tribes?
- Do spawner surveys cover different parts of the basins?
- Does the agency have an electronic app to for the public to provide catch?
- Recommend the non-treaty recreational fishery harvest hatchery chinook and release natural chinook in the Chehalis basin. Let the natural fish get to the gravel.

- Chehalis dam proposal – what is the Dept’s stance when the dam destroys habitat for salmon regarding flood control?
- Why did the Dept not defend the recreational fishery for catch and release of steelhead?
- Open the Chehalis River so we can fish for bass that eat salmon smolts
- The Chehalis dam proposal isn’t going to hurt Chinook spawning because it’s not a Chinook system.

